

PHILIP-EYE

THE NEWSLETTER of Saint Philip Presbyterian Church
Volume 53, Number 25

Houston, Texas
14 December 2009

Celebrating the Christmas Season at St. Philip

Rev. Dr. William C. Poe
Pastor

Rev. Kristy Forbes Vits
Interim Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Samuel Lanham III
Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Dr. Jack Boelens
Parish Associate

Rev. Gregory Crisp Han
Parish Associate

Rev. Helen Bailey
Parish Associate

Dr. Matthew Dirst
Organist

Dr. Justin Smith
Interim Director of Music
Margaret Dement
Director of Youth Bells

Judy Gunn
Director, Children's Ministries

Cindy Pope
Interim Director of Youth
Ministries

Karen St. Laurent
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Wilbert Parada
Facilities Supervisor
Dimas Parada
Custodian
Peter Ramadan
Custodian

Susan Estill
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December 20, 2009

4th Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 80:107

Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

The Rev. Dr. William C. Poe, preaching

Special music celebrating Mary, Christ's first disciple.

The Choir will sing Antonio Vivaldi's *Magnificat* in its entirety.

The Magnificat text, sometimes called the Song of Mary, is given an irresistible, Italianate flair, full of delightful choruses and arias and accompanied by orchestra.

In addition, Bell Canto will present a stunning, virtuosic version of

"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus."

Christmas Joy Offering received

December 24, 2009

Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

Worship Services

4:00 pm

A service especially for children and their families

7:30 pm

Service of Candle Light and Communion

The Rev. Dr. William C. Poe, preaching

Special offering for Ministers Discretionary Fund received

December 27, 2009

1st Sunday after Christmas

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148

Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

January 3, 2010

2nd Sunday after Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20

Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9) 10-18

January 6, 2010

Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

Visit our website @
www.saintphilip.net

The Staff wishes you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Bille

Justin

Wilbert

Kristy

Cindy

Dimas

Judy

Karen

Peter

Matthew

Nancy

Congregational Concerns:

Hospitalized: none known

Recuperating: **Virginia Lemen**

At home: **Bill Boren, Meredith Gartner,
Penny Vieau**

The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Martha Vieau Frietch** and family on the death of her husband, **Herman Frietch** on December 2nd; to the family of former St. Philip member, **Harold Flynn** on his death December 3; to **Chuck Johnson** and family on the death of his step-father, **Col. Howard Moore**, on December 7th; and to **Betty Anne** and **Bill Poe** and family on the death of their nephew, **Mason Jackson**, on December 12th.

Check These Announcements

The Men's Fellowship offers to all men of the church a more intimate, informal opportunity for study, fellowship and service. We meet each Friday at noon for a BYO lunch followed with a presentation and discussion. Currently we are reading *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White*, by Adam Hamilton. Get your copy from Dan Flowers and join us!!

It's that time again! We are planning to print an **updated directory with pictures**. If you would like to update, change, or correct any of your information, please fill out a form which you can pick up on the table in the Narthex or call the church office. **Information is needed by Sunday, December 20!**

Volunteer Opportunity - Lord of the Streets (LOTS): The next date for us to serve breakfast to the homeless is Sunday, January 10th. We gather in the St. Philip parking lot at 6:30 am to carpool to Trinity Episcopal Church and are back at the church by 9:00 am in time for Sunday School. Fifteen volunteers are needed. If you would like to plan ahead, our dates in 2010 are Jan. 10, March 21, May 16, July 11, Sept. 19, and Nov. 14. If January 10 is good for you, please call Janet Davis at 713 464-2385 to take part in this gratifying mission project.

The Philip-Eye will be published on January 4 and 18, 2010. Please submit information and articles in a timely manner. 10:00 am on the day of publication is the deadline. E-mail to philip-eye@saintphilip.net or leave in the PE box in the mail room.

From Your Interim Music Director:

You hear their majestic, soaring voices raised in joy and praise just about every Sunday morning - but who are the St Philip Choir staff singers, and what services do they provide to our beloved church?

First, of course, our staff singers work closely with me to select, rehearse and sing the solo music you hear, traditionally at the Offertory. This is a tricky process, because we need to find music that fits with the liturgy and message of that particular Sunday, while still being a work in each singer's repertoire! It might interest - or amaze - you to know that typically the first and only time this solo music is rehearsed with the accompaniment is about a half hour before the service - such is the exceedingly high quality of our singers' (and Matthew's and Martha's) musicianship!

Second, our staff singers take the solo parts in the choral repertoire we sing on Sundays. This means they are responsible both for the chorus's music and the solo bits, and they often need to learn all of it in a very short amount of time.

Third, our staff singers attend every Wednesday night rehearsal and sing with the choir; the idea is to have their more experienced voices provide a musical guide for the rest of the chorus, since we have to sing so much music with such relatively small amount of rehearsal time. They are very much "musical leaders" in the choir when not singing solos, and it vastly expedites the time we need to learn the music.

You already know three of our staff singers - **Cristian Guajardo**, who has lent his soaring tenor sound to us for many years, **Robin Angly**, who so generously gives of her time and formidable talent, and **Julia Fox**, who sang with the choir as a "regular" for quite some time before being hired as a staff soprano soloist this Fall. They are all beloved members of our community. Two relatively new faces, however, deserve to be introduced further. **Kyle Knappenberger**, our staff bass, arrived in Houston this Fall to commence his Masters in voice at the University of Houston Moores School of Music. Although he is an aspiring opera singer, and no doubt will be high up on a marquee somewhere soon, we in the choir hope he takes his time with his degree! Anyone who heard Kyle sing "Goin' Home" a month or so ago doesn't need to be convinced of his musical prowess, strong, resonant sound, and sensitivity. **Laura Sharpless** is our second soprano staff soloist; she is graduating in the Spring from the Moores School with a degree in Music Education. Laura and I go at least a couple years back, as she sang in the choirs at UH while I was a doctoral student there. When I got the chance to hire another soprano soloist, I jumped at the chance to work with Laura, who is really one of the bright young stars at the Moores School and will soon embark on a teaching career (hopefully remaining in Houston!). She currently serves as the student director of

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Concert Chorale, the music school's top auditioned ensemble.

I am grateful to all five of these fine musicians for all that they contribute to our worship together.

They, along with every other member of the Choir, Bell Canto, and Children and Youth Choirs, truly embody the old Chorister's Prayer:

Bless, O Lord, us thy servant who minister in thy temple; grant that what we sing with our lips we may believe in our hearts,

and that what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

New Pipe Organ Arrives Sunday, January 3rd

This first Sunday in January marks a major milestone in the life of our church: the arrival of our new organ! To celebrate, the St. Philip Choir presents works that celebrate music both earthly and divine, featuring Vaughan Williams' transcendent *Serenade to Music*, a David Ashley White setting of "When in our music God is glorified," and movements from Handel's *Ode to Saint Cecilia*, celebrating the patron saint of music.

And following worship all are invited to help with the unloading of the organ pipes and other parts as we symbolically carry our new musical instrument into the church. There has been a wonderful and enthusiastic response to signing up to help on January 3rd. You will still have the opportunity to sign up on Sunday, December 20. Those who sign up in advance are guaranteed a free lunch courtesy of the Organ Committee members.

We have asked Omar Rouchon and David Castle to be the "official" photographers on that Sunday, but we will welcome any photos that are taken on that day. We would like to have someone commit to taking a picture each day while the organ is being installed, as long as changes are visible. This picture should be taken from the same spot each day to keep an accurate record of the progress. If someone would be willing to make that commitment, please contact a member of the organ committee or leave word in the church office.

We would still like to find another small furnished apartment that could be available for one or two men for the month of January. The apartment would not have to belong to a church member, but preferably be within about 4 miles of the church. Pictures of the men coming for the installation are available on the poster in the gathering area at the sign up table.

Be sure you have Sunday, April 18, on your calendar for the dedication service at 11:00 and concert in late afternoon.

Hallelujah!

CORNER

The Hunger Offering received on December 6 benefiting the ministries of Juan Marcos Presbyterian Church totaled \$4,856.00. Thank you for your continued generosity.

Prime Timers Plan Ahead for the New Year

Be sure that your name is on the list for the latest planned activities.

January 7th, Mickey Meyers, who led the Church and Society sessions on the Holocaust, will be our docent for a trip to the Holocaust Museum. Our guided tour will include authentic film footage, artifacts, and photographs which show life in prewar Europe, the Nazi move toward the "Final Solution" and life after the Holocaust.

The Prime Timers will need to sign-up in advance for our **February 6th** visit to the Alley Theatre. The play "Wonderland" is a delightful new musical that updates Alice's adventures through an amazing pop score. To get the reasonable group ticket price of \$15 dollars we must pay for our group by January 12th. The bus will leave the church at 1:30 pm for this matinee performance.

St. Philip Youth News

SPY Service Project: At their December 13 meeting the youth of Saint Philip bagged meals for Kids Against Hunger. In the 90 minute meeting they filled 316 bags of the highly nutritional food supplement. This accounted for 1,896 meals for distribution to the hungry in our community.

Upcoming Events for SPY Bistro:

December 20: The group will gather at the "300" Bowl for an evening of strikes, spares, fun and fellowship from 6:00 to 7:30 pm.

December 27: The group takes a break for the holidays. Merry Christmas!

January 3: A new year game night plus all the usual fellowship. What are your new year's resolutions?

Café SPY Joined By Youth Choir: Have you checked out Café SPY and Youth Choir? Youth Choir meets from 9:15 to 9:45 am in the choir room. Café SPY meets in the youth room from 9:45 to 10:30 am. Cafe SPY features hot chocolate, great coffees, yummy goodies and stimulating discussion on the theme "Faith Questions".

For more on youth meetings and activities contact Cindy Pope at Cindy@saintphilip.net.

December 27 film study: *Up* 9:30 in Room 201

New beginnings and a spirit of adventure are the themes of this enchanting animation from Pixar in which a lonely old man and an eager young boy fulfill their dreams...via a helium-propelled flying house. A coming-of-old-age story that fires the imagination, *Up* is laugh-out-loud funny and wipe-away-a-tear moving.

Even as *Up* grounds its heroes in what really matters, its lessons are likely to lift you. A heartfelt, high-altitude exploration of love and loss and letting go, *Up* is thoroughly grounded in real emotion and ideas of substance.

Visit your preferred video rental source, watch the film with your full attention within a week of our study, and come prepared to share your thoughts. Here are some questions to consider that will help guide your viewing and our study:

To train yourself to watch a film closely, try using this "opening shots" exercise for the scenes leading up to the main title:

- People: Who is present? What do you learn about them?
- Time: When does the scene take place?
- Location(s): Where does it take place?
- Events: What happens?
- Mood: What is the atmosphere of the scene?
- Other: What else do you see?
- Questions: What would you like to know?

How does the film treat the following aspects of faith/spirituality? Being present, Love, Meaning Transformation, Hope, Redemption

- Film is text. How do the filmmakers' choices in visual design, color palette, locations and set design, music, and voice casting tell the story or represent values?
- What power relationships exist in the film? Are there patterns of dependency among certain groups? (On whom are they dependent?) Does this seem to be a problem in the film, or simply a matter taken for granted?

Who are the redemptive characters?

- How do we experience life? What is the world like? How are we to live? According to the film, what is the purpose of life?
- How do the filmmakers convey their vision of right and wrong? What is the source of the moral code in the world of the film? What has value?

Up is rated PG; it may resonate more powerfully with adults than with kids.

This film study will be led, as always, by Kate Burkart.

Special Offerings to Be Received

The Christmas Joy Offering Sunday, December 20

On Sunday, December 20 we will celebrate the holiday season with the annual Joy Offering. This offering has been a Christmas tradition in the Presbyterian Church for nearly seventy years and is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Our donation will be split evenly between the Board of Pensions to support assistance programs and the National Ministries of the General Assembly Council to support Presbyterian racial ethnic education. The assistance programs of the Board of Pensions help current and retired church workers through difficult times - providing needed dental and medical assistance, housing supplements, income supplements - so retirees can maintain their independence, and aid in meeting unexpected financial needs or in recovery from a natural disaster. The Joy Offering will provide funds to Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Schools for basic operations and for much needed scholarship programs. One of these schools, Presbyterian Pan American School is here in Texas at Kingsville.

Honor the great gift we commemorate during this season by generously donating to these programs that are essential to our denomination.

Christmas Eve Offering The Minister's Discretionary Fund

The offering taken during our Christmas Eve service is dedicated to the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This important fund allows our pastoral staff to respond to the needs facing people during rough times. People in crisis are often confronted with issues that seem so minor but can cause cascading problems for them. Sometimes it is a weeks worth of food or a tank of gas or help with the rent or assistance with emergency medications that keeps people from slipping into the despair of being unable to meet ongoing obligations. In utilizing this fund our ministers are able to quickly and respectfully meet such critical needs.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ remember his message of love and caring and give generously. Through our ministers, your Christmas Eve contribution will continue to give all year long.

A Message from Our Office Manager

Are you planning to make a final contribution to the church in 2009? December 31st is the last date that you can make contributions for the year 2009. A contribution is effective when delivered. Mailings must be postmarked no later the 12/31/09. Stock gifts must be transferred to St. Philip's brokerage account prior to December 31, 2009.

Please note that the church office will close at noon on December 31.

Dr. Dieter Heinzl to Lead Annual Mo-Ranch Weekend

Dr. Dieter Heinzl, currently serving as Associate Pastor for Education at Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church in Missouri will be the Keynote Speaker for the annual St. Philip Mo-Ranch weekend June 10-13, 2010. Dieter is a graduate of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (MDiv) and Princeton Theological Seminary (PhD). Dieter and his wife Renita are former members of First, Houston. His topic is "When Life Meets Faith" an examination of human/faith development and renegotiating our image of God as we grow and mature in faith.

In the beautiful surroundings of Mo-Ranch we have opportunities to study, to play, and to enjoy each other in a more relaxed way. Our program begins after supper on Thursday and continues through worship on Sunday morning. Many families arrive earlier on Thursday to get extra time in the rapids. Most of us find it difficult to leave on Sunday. Our goal is to house as many people as comfortably possible. There are some situations which require special priorities (large family groups, persons with health problems, etc.). Thanks in advance for cheerfully accepting your second choice if necessary.

Registration concludes on Sunday, December 20. When you fill out the registration form, **please be complete.** No deposit is required but your balance may be paid in three installments (January 1, February 1, March 1). **No one receives a room assignment until the completed form is received. Please register one family or individual to a form.**

Confirmations and bills will be sent out mid January 2010 by e-mail or by letter. All fees must be paid by February 1, 2010 (except for installment payments). No refunds can be made after February 1, 2010 and rooms not paid for by February 1, 2010 will be cancelled. **If you do not cancel your reservation, you must pay for your room whether you go or not.**

Accommodations

WYNNE LODGE/FLATO LODGE: Each room has two double beds. Preference given to those who wish "adults only" lodging. Cost per **room** for the entire weekend (meals included): \$207.50 per person double (\$415.00 per room); \$348.00 single.

PHEASANT RUN: Rooms for up to four occupants. Great location for families with children. Cost per **room** for the entire weekend (meals included): \$192.50 per person double (\$385.00 per room); \$318.00 single. Children under 18 pay meals only (\$46.75 each ages 4-11; \$66.50 each 12 and older; 3 and under are free).

MANOR HOUSE: The original Ranch headquarters. Large rooms. Common living room. Cost per **room** for the entire weekend including meals: \$498.00 double, \$431.50 single occupancy. Additional adults or children pay meals only. Preference given to families with Youth.

MEALS: Meal costs are included in room rates with the exception of Thursday dinner which is not included in the above rates. You may order Thursday dinner: \$12.00 for adults and \$8.50 for children. Meal tickets are required.

WRIST BANDS: When you check in you will be issued a wrist band for each member of your family. These must be worn at all times for security purposes and to receive meals.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Opportunities will be offered in digital photography. Participants who register will receive detailed information about available classes.

NAMETAGS: Remember to bring your nametag from last year. If you need additions or corrections to your nametag, let us know. If this is your first year, a nametag will be waiting for you.

If you have questions, please contact any Mo-Ranch Committee member: Michael Alexander at 281-445-9756 or almike@swbell.net; Kristy Vits at 713-622-4807 or kristy@saintphilip.net; Mo-Ranch Registration: Jeanie Flowers - 713-527-8696, jeanief3431@sbcglobal.net

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

January	13 Peter Lippincott	21 Dan Flowers
3 Rollie McGinnis	13 Gentry Atkinson	21 Mike Tomforde
3 Sandra Cooper	13 Edward Atkinson	21 Jennifer Kirk
3 Amy Irick	15 John Hannah	22 Cathy Arlinghaus
5 Bob Stanley	15 Elizabeth Moreno	23 Janet Hess
5 Nina Lambright	15 Margaret Fair	23 Stefan Ketcham
5 Jennifer Jones	16 William Howard	23 Eleanor Grant
6 Tim Baker	17 Wendy Steward	25 Lee Murphree
7 Van Rathgeber	17 Casey Lambright	27 Nancy Harwood
10 Sheila Stegall	17 Sarah Ajak	29 Holly Han
10 Tom Williams	18 Stan Brandenberger	30 Paul Purcell
12 Dee Manley	18 Carol Junkin	31 Frank Keever
13 Cheryl Barker	20 Nelda Simmons	